

Family Literacy, NCFL, a non-profit organization located in Louisville, KY, recognized world-wide for their effectiveness and innovativeness in teaching children and adults to read. The NCFL, founded in 1989, has worked diligently year after year in an attempt to bring about a positive change in the level of family literacy rates. This group has been soulfully dedicated to placing family literacy on the national agenda and has been very successful through their efforts. The NCFL rightly understands that to live without an education is to live without a future.

Sharon Darling got her start in education 35 years ago in the basement of the Ninth & O Baptist Church. The basement of this Baptist Church is where she first began to teach illiterate adults to read. It was also the first time she began to realize that she could make a difference in people's lives. She recognized that without access to knowledge, these people would never possess the ability to fight their way out of poverty or empower themselves with the gift of rational thought. If they cannot read, no amount of money or Federal assistance will help.

Throughout her career in education, Sharon has spent time as a teacher, administrator, and educational entrepreneur, constantly working to develop new and improved strategies for teaching children and adults how to read and how to interpret what they read. She has served as an advisor on issues dealing with education to governors, policy makers, business leaders, and foundations across the country. She has been and remains an invaluable resource to the educational community.

The National Humanities Medal will not be the first time Sharon has been recognized for her work. She received the 2000 Razor Walker Award from the University of North Carolina for her contributions to the lives of children and youth; the Woman Distinction Award from Birmingham Southern University in 1999; the Albert Schweitzer Prize for Humanitarianism from Johns Hopkins University in 1998; the Charles A. Dana Award for Pioneering Achievement in education in 1996; and the Harold W. McGraw Award for Outstanding Educator in 1993. She has also received several honorary doctorate degrees for her contributions to education and has been featured on the Arts & Entertainment television network's series, "Biography." Her latest accolade places her in the company of such great men and women as Stephen Ambrose, Ken Burns, and Toni Morrison. The National Humanities Medal is the Federal Government's highest honor recognizing achievement in the humanities.

Sharon Darling has been a shining star for the literacy movement throughout her career as an educator, guiding the unfortunate into a land of opportunity. I congratulate Ms. Darling for this much deserved distinction and thank her for striving to make the

world a better place to live and to learn.●

TRIBUTE TO MICHIGAN'S OLYMPIANS

● Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I rise to commend the residents of the State of Michigan who participated in the recently concluded 2002 Winter Olympics.

"Swifter! Higher! Stronger!" That's the Olympic motto.

I am proud to say that at least 13 athletes who call or have called Michigan their home followed that motto and competed with the world's best in this year's Winter Olympics. Among them was Naomi Lang, the first Native American to compete in the history of the Winter Olympics and who placed 11th in ice dancing.

Athletes included members of the men's Silver Medal hockey team: Chris Chelios, of Detroit; Mike Modano, of Livonia; Brian Rafalski, of Dearborn, Brian Rolston, of Flint; Doug Weight, of Warren, and Mike York, of Waterford.

Other athletes from Michigan were: Women's hockey team Silver Medalists Shelley Looney, of Brownstown Township and Angela Ruggiero, of Harper's Woods; Mark Grimmette, of Muskegon, and Chris Thorpe, of Marquette, who won the Silver and Bronze medals respectively in the men's luge doubles; Jean Racine, of Waterford, who placed 5th in the women's bobsled, and Todd Eldredge, of Lake Angelus, who placed sixth in men's singles figure skating.

I am so proud of all of them!

Besides these wonderful athletes, I am pleased to say that another 15 Olympic competitors and one coach came from the U.S. Olympic Education Center based at Northern Michigan University in Marquette.

These athletes didn't just do Michigan proud, or the Nation proud; they made the whole world of amateur athletics proud.

They, and all the great athletes who participated, gave us a chance to share together in another motto of the Winter Olympics, "Celebrating Humanity."

It was impossible to watch these games without marveling at all the hard work and dedication these young people brought to the games.

So, again, let me congratulate the athletes from Michigan as well as the athletes from across our Nation and around the world who gave us a chance to watch the best compete against each other and together celebrate the spirit of humanity, the spirit of the Olympics.●

TRIBUTE TO MR. CLIFFORD C. LAPLANTE

● Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a great American who has served his country well. For over five decades, Cliff LaPlante has dedicated himself to supporting the defense needs of the Nation. Born in

upstate New York, Cliff entered the service of his country as an Air Force officer during the Korean War. During his 20 years of Air Force service, Cliff specialized in acquisition matters where he helped ensure that our troops were provided with the best equipment our industrial base could provide.

Cliff became well known to this body long before leaving the Air Force in his role as a legislative liaison officer to Capitol Hill. He truly distinguished himself as a trusted and admired representative of the Air Force.

Selected to be a full Colonel in 1970, Cliff decided to forgo this much deserved promotion and instead served for eight years as the Boeing Company's first full-time liaison representative to Capitol.

In 1979, Cliff joined the General Electric Company where he has remained for the past 23 years helping General Electric to "Bring Good Things to Life."

Now, after more than 50 years of service, Cliff is retiring from General Electric, to begin yet another chapter in his life. Together with his wife, Cecilia, Cliff has established a charitable foundation called "Children Come First." This foundation is dedicated to helping underprivileged children. In the same spirit that has exemplified all of Cliff's past undertakings, he will devote much of his time lending a helping hand to kids to ensure they have a chance filled with hope for tomorrow.

I will miss this jaunty man with the fast walk and warm, charming personality. Along with all my colleagues who have enjoyed his friendship over the years, I wish him well in his latest "retirement" and the best of luck with his "Children Come First" Foundation.●

IN RECOGNITION OF MAYOR DOUGLAS H. PALMER

● Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Mayor Douglas Palmer of Trenton, NJ who is being honored by the Mercer County Chamber of Commerce as its Citizen of the Year.

Mayor Palmer has achieved a long list of accomplishments since becoming the mayor of his hometown. Under Mayor Palmer's leadership, tremendous strides have been made in the Trenton area. He has overseen the construction and rehabilitation of hundreds of new homes for working families and created numerous economic development projects that have led to the lowest unemployment rate in a decade.

Some of Mayor Palmer's most impressive achievements include the work he has done for the children of Trenton. He established the "Trenton Loves Children" program, representing the city's first comprehensive program for children that ensures preschoolers will receive free immunizations against childhood diseases. He also brought the